

20 AFRICAN-AMER



Kimberly Oliver,
U.S. Teacher of the Year

“From
what we get,
we can make
a living; what
we give, how-
ever, makes
a life.”

—Arthur Ashe



John Lewis,
Civil Rights Leader



Rita Dove,
Poet Laureate

There is more to
Black History Month
than honoring Martin
Luther King Jr.
Introduce your class
to a new generation
of heroes.
By Tara Bardeen

Black History Month is a time to honor the significant contributions of African-Americans throughout history. Introduce your students to these 20 super-achievers and then share the classroom activities on page 38.

Kimberly Oliver

NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR (B. 1976)

Why not start by paying homage to a great teacher. Oliver was awarded the 2006 National Teacher of the Year award. The dedicated kindergarten teacher spearheaded the profound turnaround of her school, Broad Acres Elementary School in

Silver Spring, Maryland, despite many challenges, such as lack of resources.

TO LEARN MORE: Visit www.mcps.k12.md.us/info/kimoliver.

John Lewis

CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER (B. 1940)

The son of sharecroppers, John Lewis is now a Georgia congressman. As a college student, Lewis played a key role in the struggle to end segregation. A leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Lewis stood at the head of the peaceful march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. He was attacked again and again for his beliefs, but stood firm.

ICANS

YOUR STUDENTS SHOULD MEET



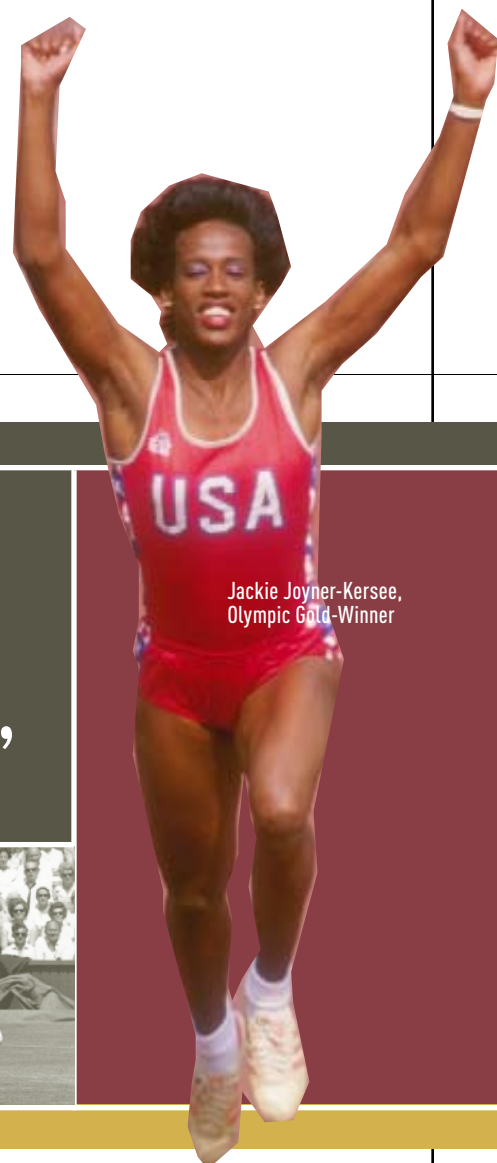
Toni Morrison,
Nobel Prize-Winning Author

“Achievement is difficult. It requires enormous effort. Those who can work through the struggle are the ones who are going to be successful.”

—Jackie Joyner-Kersey



Arthur Ashe,
Tennis Champion



Jackie Joyner-Kersey,
Olympic Gold-Winner

TO LEARN MORE: Visit www.achievement.org to see video interviews with Congressman Lewis.

Rita Dove

POET LAUREATE (B. 1953)

In 1993, Rita Dove became the first African-American poet laureate of the Library of Congress. Her most famous work is *Thomas and Beulah*, poems about the lives of her grandparents for which she won the 1987 Pulitzer Prize.

TO LEARN MORE: To see videos of Rita reading her poetry (and watch her dance the rumba!), go to <http://people.virginia.edu/~rfd4b/home.html>.

Toni Morrison

AUTHOR, PROFESSOR (B. 1931)

In 1993, Morrison became the first African-American to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. Best known for her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Beloved*, Morrison explores the African-American experience through vivid dialogue and richly descriptive language.

TO LEARN MORE: Visit www.visionaryproject.com for a video interview.

Jackie Joyner-Kersey

OLYMPIC MEDALIST (B. 1962)

One of the greatest athletes of the 20th century, Jackie Joyner-Kersey has three number-one rankings in

the long jump and six in the heptathlon, plus three Olympic gold medals, one silver, and two bronze. And she accomplished all this despite suffering from asthma. Jackie famously said: “Achievement is difficult. It requires enormous effort. Those who can work through the struggle are the ones who are going to be successful.”

TO LEARN MORE: Visit http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/siforwomen/top_100/1

Romare Bearden

ARTIST, AUTHOR (1911–1988)

Recognized as one of the 20th century’s most innovative artists, Bearden

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is best known for his richly textured collages depicting scenes of everyday life. Bearden's works can be seen at museums such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

TO LEARN MORE: See Bearden's art at www.beardenfoundation.org.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

NBA PLAYER AND COACH (B. 1947)

Considered one of the greatest NBA players of all time,



Kareem Abdul-Jabbar,
Basketball Player

cessor to navigate to www.cs4fn.org.

Carol Moseley Braun

SENATOR, LAWYER, EDUCATOR (B. 1947)

In 1993, Moseley Braun became the first African-American woman to be elected to the Senate. For six years, she represented the state of Illinois, where she championed healthcare and education reform.

TO LEARN MORE: Visit www.thehistorymakers.com.

math and science classes.

TO LEARN MORE: Jet over to www.usa-hero.com.

Jesse Jackson Sr.

CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST (B. 1941)

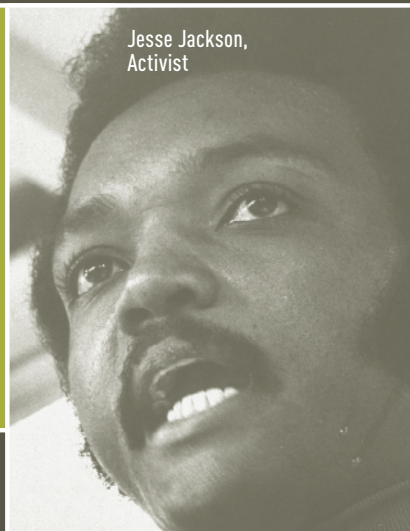
As a young man, Jackson stood beside Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, Alabama. He went on to found the Rainbow Coalition and run for president in 1984 and 1988. Jackson remains an important African-American leader.



Aretha Franklin,
Singer

“At the end of the day, we must go forward with hope and not backward by fear and division.”

—Jesse Jackson



Jesse Jackson,
Activist

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar won a record six Most Valuable Player awards, played on six championship teams, and accumulated 38,387 points, the NBA's highest career total.

TO LEARN MORE: Jump over to www.ionconomy.com/kareem33/index.html.

Mark E. Dean

COMPUTER SCIENTIST (B. 1957)

As one of IBM's "idea men," Dean holds more than 30 patents, including three of the original nine patents on IBM's first PC. In 1999, he led the team that created the first one-gigahertz microprocessor, a chip that could perform one billion calculations per second. This chip would become an integral part of many of IBM's PowerPC systems.

TO LEARN MORE: Use your micropro-

Aretha Franklin

SINGER (B. 1942)

Known as the "Queen of Soul," Aretha Franklin brings spiritual passion into pop music and inspires listeners with her powerful voice. She has won 19 Grammy Awards and was the first woman to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

TO LEARN MORE: Show Aretha some R-E-S-P-E-C-T and go to www.time.com/time/time100/artists

Christine Mann Darden

SCIENTIST (B. 1942)

A lead strategist for the NASA Langley Research Center in Virginia, Darden is a national expert in the field of sonic shockwaves, also called "sonic booms." She encourages students to follow their interests into high-level

TO LEARN MORE: Visit http://library.thinkquest.org/j0112391/jesse_jackson.htm.

Arthur Ashe

TENNIS PLAYER, ACTIVIST (1943–1993)

Arthur Ashe changed the face of tennis when, in 1963, he became the first African-American to represent the United States at the Davis Cup. Off the court, Ashe raised awareness about the oppressive South African apartheid government, AIDS prevention, and keeping kids in school.

TO LEARN MORE:

Visit www.arthurashe.org

Guion "Guy" Bluford Jr.

FORMER NASA ASTRONAUT, RETIRED USAF COLONEL (B. 1942)

In 1983, Bluford, as a member of Challenger mission STS-8, became

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the first African-American in space. Before retiring from NASA in 1993, Bluford logged more than 688 hours in space. He was later inducted into the International Space Hall of Fame.

TO LEARN MORE:

Voyage to www.jsc.nasa.gov/bios.

Ben Carson

NEUROSURGEON (B. 1951)

An accomplished neurosurgeon at Johns Hopkins Children's Center in Baltimore, Carson led the first medical team to successfully separate conjoined twins. He also mentors children through his nonprofit organization, the Carson Scholars Fund.

TO LEARN MORE:

Visit www.drben Carson.com.

Marian Wright Edelman

SOCIAL ACTIVIST (B. 1939)

As the founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund, Edelman is a powerful advocate for disadvantaged families of all races. She has received more than 100 honorary degrees and awards.

TO LEARN MORE:

Visit www.childrensdefense.org

Gloria WilderBrathwaite

PEDIATRICIAN (B. 1964)

In her big, blue mobile medical unit, WilderBrathwaite provided medical care to poor children in Washington, D.C. After seeing the hardship of generational poverty in the communities she served, she founded Core Health, a community-driven company dedicated to improving the quality of services in underserved areas.

TO LEARN MORE: Visit www.caringinstitute.org/2005winners.htm

August Wilson

PLAYWRIGHT (1945–2005)

Wilson used the power of theater to chronicle the 20th-century African-American experience, as in "The Pittsburgh Cycle," which depicts the lives and times of African-Americans in 10 different decades.

TO LEARN MORE:

Visit www.africanaculture.org

Stevie Wonder

SINGER, MUSICIAN, SONGWRITER (B. 1950)

Blind from infancy, Stevie Wonder started performing at the age of 12 and continues to tour to this day. A musician and songwriter, Wonder plays numerous instruments. He has had 30 top-ten hits, over 20 Grammys, and been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

TO LEARN MORE:

Visit www.steviewonder.net

Debra Lee

CEO OF BET (B. 1955)

When Lee became president and CEO of Black Entertainment Television in 2006, she took the reins of the most prosperous African-American-owned business in the country. The network reaches more than 80 million households and has changed the face of television.

TO LEARN MORE: Visit www.bet.com.

Tara Bardeen is an educator in Denver, Colorado who specializes in language and culture.

→ INSPIRING ACTIVITIES

TEAM REMARKABLE

What would it be like if these remarkable African-Americans gathered in the same room to solve a common problem? What valuable skills and experiences would each bring to the discussion? Have students select a remarkable African-American, study him or her, and assume the role of that person for a day. Group the students into teams of four and ask them to create an action plan to combat global warming (or other issue of your choosing) utilizing the unique talents of each remarkable person. Challenge the students to integrate the diverse talents of their remarkable role models to form a unified plan.

MY HERO MOVIE

As a class, select a local or well-known African-American hero to portray in a short film. Working in groups, divide up the tasks of movie production, such as writing, storyboarding, acting, directing, editing, scor-

ing music, and designing costumes. Once the film is finished, visit www.myhero.com to submit your hero film for inclusion on the Web site.

INSPIRED ACTION

Challenge your students to start their own remarkable lives today. As a class, research community outreach organizations in your area and select a program to support throughout the school year. A foundation supported or operated by one of these remarkable African-Americans could be a good place to start.

PATCHWORK PORTRAITS

Embrace the collage style of Romare Bearden and create a magnificent gallery of African-American heroes at your school. Introduce students to Bearden's artistic style through Jan Greenberg's book *Romare Bearden: Collage of Memories*. Have students select an African-American hero and bring a photo of that person

to class. Give students sheets of stiff paper, scissors, glue, and a variety of newspaper clippings, fabric scraps, magazine ads, and oil pastels to use in creating portraits of their heroes.

CIVIL RIGHTS SONGBOOK

Teach about the Civil Rights movement using the power of song. Have students study songs from the 1950s through the 1970s that describe the struggles and dreams of African-Americans during that period. Compile the song lyrics into a class book complete with student-written liner notes highlighting historical events at the time.

VIRTUAL SPEAKER

Bring your lessons to life with a guest appearance from someone who experienced the Civil Rights movement firsthand. Visit www.visionaryproject.org for excellent interviews with Coretta Scott King, Oliver Hill, Benjamin Hooks, and other Civil Rights veterans.